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STORY

OF

THE FIRST BROTHERS.

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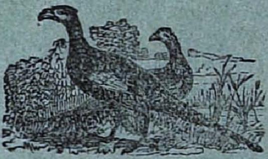

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STORY

OF

THE FIRST BROTHERS.

A very long time ago, there were no people living in the world. God then made the first man, called Adam, and his wife, Eve. God made them quite good, and placed them in a pleasant garden, full of trees covered with fruit. If Adam and Eve had continued to obey God, they would never have died, but always have been happy.

Our first parents sinned against God, and He drove them out of the garden. But before doing so, He gave them a promise that there should be born a Saviour who could take them to a far

more beautiful place than the garden which they were to leave.

Adam and Eve were now sinful. Just as a stream from a bitter fountain must be bitter, so the children of Adam and Eve must have their sinful nature. After a time, Eve had a little son. She was very glad, and called him *Cain*, a name which means *possession*. By and by she had another son, but him she called *Abel*, meaning *grief*. Eve did not expect so much happiness from him as from his brother.

Cain and Abel were the first two little boys that lived in the world. There were no children for them to play with. They ran about on the green grass, and gathered the wild flowers which grew on the sides of the hills. When they were tired, they would

lie down and sleep with their little arms around each other's neck. When their parents saw them so loving, they little thought what would afterwards happen.

Cain and Abel, when they grew up, were taught to work hard like their father. And that was right. Cain was a farmer. He dug the ground, sowed grain, and planted fruit trees. Abel took care of sheep; he was a shepherd.

God wished Adam and his children to remember the Saviour He had promised; so he taught them a way of keeping it in mind. He told them to take a lamb, to kill it, and to burn it on a heap of stones. This was called a *sacrifice.* The person who did it said, "I have sinned, I deserve to die instead of this lamb." The sacrifice of itself, could not take away sin;

but the death of the lamb pointed to the death of Jesus Christ, when His life was given for our life.

Jesus Christ is the only Son of God. He is called the Lamb of God, who was slain for us. Till He died on the cross, men were to offer sacrifices.

One day, Cain and Abel both made offerings to God. Cain brought some fruit. It was as though he said, "It is God who makes the grain and fruit to grow; so I will bring this fruit to thank Him for His care."

This was right so far, but it was not enough. You will see by what Abel brought, what Cain should have done.

Abel took some of the best lambs of his flock to offer to God. They were killed to show that Abel felt he was a sinner, and

that he believed in the Saviour who should come to take away, by His death, the guilt of sin.

Cain only thanked God; he did not confess that he was a sinner, and seek pardon through the Saviour. God was pleased with Abel's offering, but He was not pleased with Cain's. This made Cain very angry. Instead of being sorry for his own disobedience, he hated and envied his brother, because he was good and because God loved him best. Cain showed his feelings by his dark, sullen countenance.

God spoke to Cain. He asked him why he was angry. If Cain did what was right, God would be pleased with him too.

Cain did not listen to God, but went on in his wicked ways. One day when he was talking

with Abel alone in a field, he killed him. The first death was a murder, and that by a brother. Cain thought that no one saw him, but God did; for He sees all that is done; He hears all that is spoken; He knows all that we think.

God said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" The wicked Cain answered, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" He told a lie to God, and asked, Is it my duty to watch over my brother?

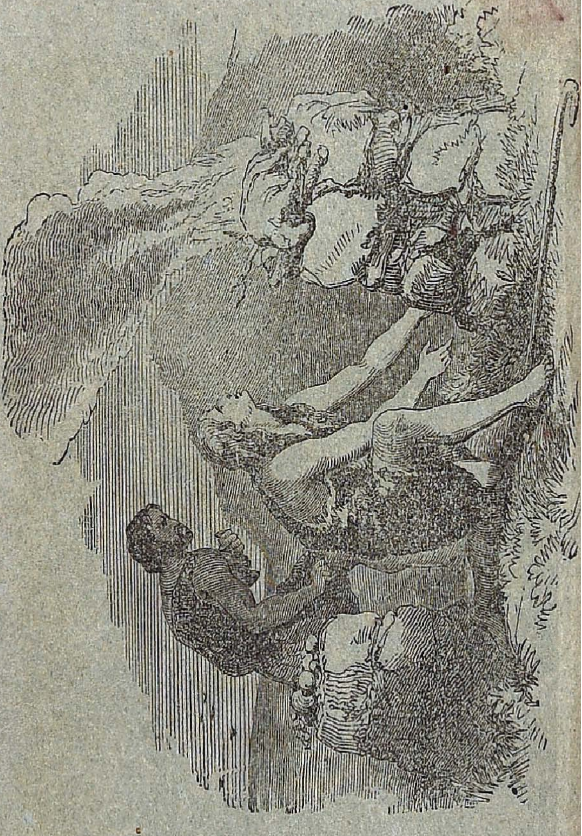
God said to him, "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Cain was to wander through the world, seeking rest and finding none, afraid that every one would kill him. So Cain went and lived a great way off.

How grieved Adam and Eve must have been! They must have wept as they put dear Abel in the ground; and they must have wept still more to think that Cain was so wicked.

We see how wrong it is to give way to anger and envy. If we let bad thoughts come into our mind, we do not know what we may do. Through such feelings, brothers, who once clung lovingly to the same mother, may kill each other. It is sad to think how often brothers quarrel when they grow up.

You may think it impossible that you should ever do such a wicked thing as Cain did. But God's Holy Book says that every one who hates his brother is a murderer. Anger is the root of murder. God looks to our hearts

as well as to our actions. Ask God, by His Holy Spirit, to make you gentle and loving, kind even to those who hate you.

Abel trusted in the Saviour, and after thousands of years he is still happy with Him in heaven. You may, at death, join the glorious company, who, with crowns of gold on their heads, sing the praises of Him who died for them. Confess your sins and seek pardon for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Place your trust in Jesus Christ alone; worship only the one true God; and it will be well with you here and hereafter.

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